

Patent Claims

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1. A control device to operate a piece of equipment with
- a control element (1) activated by hand; and with
 - at least one light detector (2) provided at the hand grip that gives off a brightness signal,
- wherein the light detector (2) is coupled to an evaluation circuit (3) that evaluates the brightness signal in such a way that when it falls short of or exceeds a prescribed brightness threshold, a control signal is sent to a control unit (4) of the equipment.
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2. A control device according to claim 1, **characterized in that** the light detector (2) at the control element (1) does not contain a light-emitting element.
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3. A control device according to claim 1 or 2, **characterized in that** the brightness threshold can be variably adjusted by the evaluation circuit (3) according to the surrounding conditions.
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4. A control device according to claim 3, **characterized in that** to determine the surrounding conditions, a surrounding light detector (5) is provided that is coupled to the evaluation circuit (3).
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5. A control device according to one of claims 1 through 4, **characterized in that** the light detector (2) is a photodiode, a phototransistor or a light-sensitive resistor (LDR light-dependent resistor).
6. A control device according to one of claims 1 through 5, **characterized in that** a number of light detectors (2) are provided at the control element (1) at a minimum of two places in the grip areas of both hands.
7. A soil compaction device with a control device according to one of the above claims, **characterized in that** the control element (1) is a guide handle of the soil compaction device.